



Intuitive String Art

Introduction

Jean (aka Hans) Arp was one of the founders of the Dada movement in the early 20th century, and is recognized for making intuition, randomness and chance part of his work. He purposely sought to remove himself from preliminary planning and process so that his art was a product of chance and spontaneity. This exercise explores that idea by allowing cut string to fall on your substrate randomly to create shapes or frames for stream of consciousness mark making and writing. Embrace the randomness!

Mindful Reflection

As an experiment, consider this poem by Dana Faulds and the quality of letting go of planning or trying to control the outcome of your art projects

Allow

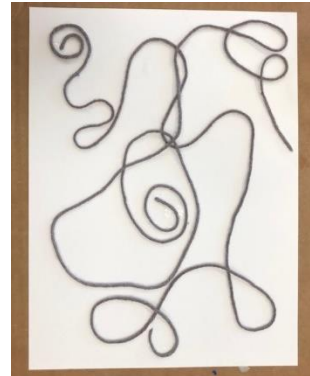
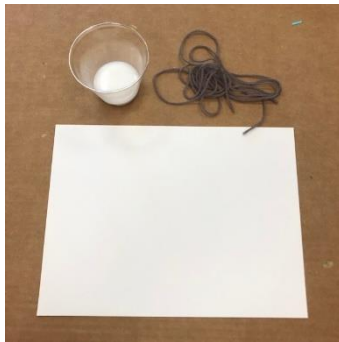
There is no controlling life.
Try corralling a lightning bolt,
containing a tornado. Dam a
stream and it will create a new
channel. Resist, and the tide
will sweep you off your feet.
Allow, and grace will carry
you to higher ground. The only
safety lies in letting it all in –
the wild and the weak; fear,
fantasies, failures and success.
When loss rips off the doors of
the heart, or sadness veils your
vision with despair, practice
becomes simply bearing the truth.
In the choice to let go of your
known way of being, the whole
world is revealed to your new eyes.

Materials

school glue, like Elmer's Glue-All
small bowl
two pieces of cotton string, cut 12" to 30" long
9" x 12" sheet of watercolor paper
paint brush
liquid watercolors, assorted colors

water container
paper towel
illustrator pens, assorted sizes

Directions



1. Squeeze glue into a small bowl and add a small amount of water to make it easy to stir.
2. Cut lengths of cotton string 12" to 30" long. Place them in the glue mixture until they are saturated. Remove one string at a time and gently run your fingers over it above small bowl to remove excess glue.
3. Allow the string to fall onto the board in a wandering line. Once it has touched the surface, try not to move or control its shape. Continue with the second piece of string, allowing them to overlap. Allow to dry.



4. Using watercolors, randomly paint sections created by the spaces between the strings. Allow to dry completely.
5. Using a fine-line marker and stream-of-consciousness approach, fill the spaces with colors, textures, patterns, words or small drawings. Instead of viewing the artwork as a whole, concentrate on shape or space at a time. Think of this as a mixed media doodle, and entertain any thoughts or images that come to your mind.